

App. No. 09/809,639
Amendment Dated December 1, 2003
Reply to Office Action of September 30, 2003

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are pending in this application. Claims 1-18 were rejected. Claims 1-3 and 7 have been amended. Claims 19 and 20 have been added. No new matter has been added. In view of the following remarks, reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being unpatentable over United States Patent No. 5,903,894 issued to *Renertis*. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Claim 1, as amended, teaches "a generic driver that is programmed to resolve and maintain addressing information for a plurality of PCI devices..."

Claim 1 is not anticipated nor rendered obvious by *Renertis* because *Renertis* does not teach nor suggest the limitations recited in Claim 1. *Renertis* teaches an operating system that loads an appropriate device driver for each identified device. The appropriate device driver supports one of the specific device objects. The device driver is a conventional software module used by the operating system to access devices connected to the computer system. Typically, the original equipment manufacturer who has supplied the associated device provides the device driver. Thus, the device driver provides the operating system with the functionality of the device. The hierarchical data structure taught by *Renertis* allows additional functionality for a device by allowing the device to inherit functionality provided by another device above it in the hierarchy. However, even for this additional functionality, the functionality was first specified in a specific device driver associated with a particular device.

Renertis does not teach "a generic driver that is programmed to resolve and maintain addressing information for a plurality of PCI devices," as recited in Applicants' Claim 1. Thus, Claim 1, as amended, is proposed to be allowable, and notice to that effect is solicited.

Claim 7, as amended, contains essentially the same limitations as Claim 1. The Office Action rejected Claim 7 for the same reasons that Claim 1 was rejected. As discussed above, Claim 1 is proposed to be allowable. Thus, Claim 7 is allowable for at least the same reasons that Claim 1 is allowable, and notice to that effect is solicited.

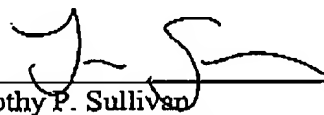
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Dependent Claims 2-6 and 8-20 are allowable for at least the same reasons that the base claims on which they rely are allowable, and notice to that effect is solicited. For at least the above reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the § 102(b) rejections of Claims 1-18 are improper, and respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections.

In view of the above remarks, Applicants respectfully request a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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